

State of Alaska
Department of Health & Social Services

Frank H. Murkowski
Governor
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0001
NEWS RELEASE



Joel Gilbertson
Commissioner
907-465-3030
FAX: 907-465-3068
www.hss.state.ak.us

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State agency announces “EMS has Injury Prevention in the Bag” program

Tools to address Alaska’s significantly higher rates of home injuries & deaths

The Alaska Dept. of Health & Social Services, Div. of Public Health, Section of Community Health and Emergency Medical Services (CHEMS) is pleased to announce their new program “EMS has Injury Prevention in the Bag”. In an effort to reduce home injuries and deaths, particularly among children and the elderly, the Injury Surveillance and Prevention Program (ISAPP) has put together 100 bags filled with safety devices for rural Emergency Medical Service (EMS) providers to distribute in their communities.

"Injury Prevention is a key component of Alaska's EMS program," Mark Johnson, CHEMS Chief, said "Through this new program, we give the state's EMTs a whole bag of tools they need to provide injury prevention activities in their communities."

Statistics show that rates of home injuries and deaths, such as poisonings and falls, are significantly higher in Alaska compared to other states. The goal of the “EMS has Injury Prevention in the Bag” program is to reduce home injuries and deaths by distributing safety devices to rural areas where these injuries are more likely to occur.

CHEMS developed a two-hour curriculum to train Emergency Medical Technicians on the use of the various safety devices. This includes a PowerPoint presentation on injury prevention, as well as time to examine and practice with the safety devices. The program will be offered during the state EMS Symposium in November. The final goal is to make the PowerPoint presentation a part of the regular training schedule for all emergency medical services providers. Two hours of CME credit have been approved for the class.

After training, EMTs will distribute the devices in their communities at their own discretion based on need. The EMTs will train community members on proper use of the safety devices through health fairs, at schools, and at fire/EMS department open houses. Re-supply of devices can be obtained through the state Injury surveillance and Prevention Program.

The “EMS has Injury Prevention in the Bag” program is a one-year pilot program funded by the federal Rural Hospital Flexibility grant program. The program gives EMTs the resources to seek future funding on their own.

The bags will include:

Course brochure

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CD Rom with program information
Video-Gatekeeper Suicide Prevention training
Furniture straps
Safety Latches/toilet
Carbon monoxide detectors
Smoke alarm
Cabinet/drawer locks
Cabinet/drawer latches
Piggy banks
Window blind cleats
Choke tube
Bath thermometers
Corner guards
Night Lights
Outlet covers
Yak Trax
First Aid kits
Duct tape
Bathtub adhesive
Poison Control magnets/stickers
Reflector materials/tags
Safety posters

For more information on the “EMS has Injury Prevention in the Bag” program, contact Zoann Murphy, Health & Social Services Planner, Section of Community Health and Emergency Medical Services, Injury Surveillance & Prevention Program at (907) 465-1185.

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For more information, please contact

Ross Soboleff
Public Information Officer III
Department of Health and Social Services
(907) 465-1611